

Approved For Release 2008/01/23 : CIA-RDP85T00153R000300090034-3
Eyes only to
Mr Lehman

Dick -
Helene's
views -- a
thoughtful
statement -
Bruce

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4 September 1979
D/OPA-79-1045

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, National Foreign Assessment Center

FROM : Helene L. Boatner
Director, Political Analysis

SUBJECT : NIOs IV: Options

REFERENCE : Memo from NIO/Warning to DDCI, same subject,
dtd 3Jul79

1. Dick Lehman's paper raises almost the entire range of organizational and management issues that have concerned us for the past several years. Before commenting on the specifics of his paper, therefore, I would like to make a few more general points.

2. Philosophically, I have always been attracted by the idea of a geographic organization of DDI/NFAC and indeed am dreamer enough to look forward to an integration of all relevant Agency efforts along geographic lines over the very long term. But I am extremely skeptical that now is the time to commit ourselves to drastic organizational changes--in that direction or any other--for a number of reasons:

- I believe (and I have heard the DDCI express himself along similar lines) that any major organizational change takes at least a year, and usually longer, to result in a net improvement. In the meantime, the result is a net loss--both in morale and in product. This does not seem to me a propitious time for a conscious sacrifice of our short run capabilities.
- Any move you make is going to run into some opposition. A major one will meet major opposition. The atmosphere of the time is such that unpleasant publicity, targetted personally against the DCI and probably with undertones of "us versus him," seems highly likely. The prospect appalls me.
- Parochially, my troops have been through at least three (it depends on how you count) major reorganizations in the past

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five years. Things are finally on the upswing, and I'd hate to see them put through yet another trauma so soon.

3. Beyond that, I am not at all convinced that the end result that Dick proposes is workable. The fundamental flaw, to my mind, is the continuing existence of an Associate for National Intelligence (or whatever) at the same time that responsibility for most of the national product is spread among other units. As a practical matter, I would expect to see some sort of dedicated drafting and coordinating staff evolve under each of the three substantive associates, so that we would end up with three or four mini-ONEs and even worse problems than we have now.

4. As to the specifics of Dick's paper, it seems to take for granted several things I think worth questioning:

- that the NIOs should not have a collection role,
- that the number of NIOs is right and all NIO slots should necessarily be of the same grade, at least in the short run,
- that you would need to perpetuate assistant NIOs even if there were also a drafting staff,
- that the fundamental problem is one of organization.

5. To begin with the last first, I see the fundamental problem as the lack of clarity as to the missions of the NIOs or whatever body should replace them. If that could be resolved, it seems to me we could figure out a reasonable way to organize them, with or without a broader reorganization of NFAC. The original justification for NIOs was that Bill Colby wanted one individual to turn to for support on all aspects of our intelligence effort on a given area--in their roles, collection and liaison with customers were at least as important as production. Given the prejudice I revealed in paragraph 2, I found that eminently sensible. Whether this DCI consciously decided that he wanted the NIOs to perform a different role, or whether matters simply evolved, I do not know. But one thing that has happened is that, through retention of the customer liaison role, the NIOs have come to be ever more widely involved in production of substantive papers under the unexamined assumption that they should have a personal hand in all tasks levied through them. Concurrently, however, both the DCI and the former D/NFAC have used them as personal staff. The result is that neither the NIOs nor the Offices have any clear idea of what their inter-relationships should be.

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6. What should the production role be? If there is also a collection role, the NIOs should work for the DCI directly and the production role must be severely limited, for the practical reason that there are only 24 hours in each day. The simple, straightforward way to establish a limit under the present organizational structure is to specify coordination of national intelligence only. If the limitation of the NIOs to a liaison/production role is a conscious, agreed decision, we still need far more clarity than we have now. The options are clear:

- total responsibility for management and coordination of national intelligence, which implies a modest drafting staff.
- a staff and coordinating role (no management and no substantive responsibility) for all work done for specified customers.
- full substantive responsibility for such projects as are specifically assigned to them by the D/NFAC (with the Offices providing drafters or with the aid of a small drafting staff). The Offices would have no responsibility for the quality of the end product, but they would, of course, be responsible for substantive coordination.

7. Another question that demands examination before you try to decide how much responsibility to vest in whom is whether you really want Estimates and IIMs to be what they have recently become--a compendium of almost all the facts that may be relevant to the subject under discussion, tacked on to a paper of substantial length itself. The Soviet-Cuban IIM now totals 113 pages. It has been in process since April. It has been through 8 major drafts and 4 minor ones, and it now looks like there will be at least 1 more. The Saudi NIE, as now outlined, promises to turn into a similar marathon, as does the Caribbean IIM. It simply is not practical to try to handle a substantial number of papers of this nature with the resources now available. Nor do I find the long, elaborate quadrille we go through during Community coordination an efficient way to do business.

8. Getting (at last) to the specific options laid out by Dick, I have the following comments:

A. Neo-Colby

I do not see how the same body can be responsible for national

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production and for critical review of Community product; these are competitive functions. I don't think NFAC in general now feels very "national" so wouldn't worry overmuch about an identity crisis. The number and grade of NIOs is not fixed in the constellations.

A1. Neo-ONE

If this were the preferred solution, I would transform Assistant NIOs into the nucleus of the drafting staff and provide for all positions to be rotational (though in practice this would not turn out to be universally enforceable, nor would you want it to). By maintaining a fairly high level of rotation, you could add another "pro:" the number of analysts trained in estimative writing would gradually increase. On the "con" side, there would be less NFAC-ex-NIO (as well as Community) participation in Community products under the Neo-ONE structure. I don't find the other "cons" very convincing, and indeed see positive advantages to increased opportunities for substantive disagreement across component lines.

Dick does not, however, address what I as a staffer found the least satisfactory element of the ONE/DDI arrangement during my time there-- the separation of the policy support role (which rested primarily with the DDI) from the national intelligence role. Nor do I have a neat solution. Were such functions, as well as national intelligence, vested in an enlarged NIO structure with staff, the rest of NFAC would be reduced to something like a big OBG. Yet complete separation of ad hoc policy support from national intelligence would once again lead to the latter becoming less and less relevant. So, you would have to provide for sharing that function, with the D/NFAC or a delegate making each determination on a case by case basis.

Nor does he list as a "pro" either here or in other appropriate places what I see as one of the major pluses of the ONE arrangement-- the institutionalization of a review by a group who taken together comprise a world view. In my time, at least, it was not so much that each member of the Board was a generalist--most were not--but that taken together they brought a wide range of perspectives to bear on any question. The NIOs could perform such a function but don't.

B. Radical Surgery

Needless to say, I see little if any virtue in this option--it seems to sacrifice everything for organizational neatness.

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C. Fix the Present System

I do, however, value clear-cut responsibility when possible, which leaves me discontent with a mission statement that includes responsibility for "arranging the production of major papers." I immediately wonder who is responsible for the substance and how we determine what is major for this purpose.

C1. A Fix With Emphasis on National

Obviously, therefore, I like this one better--partly for the reason just cited, and partly because I think someone, somewhere should be devoting full time and attention to the quality of national intelligence. The sole listed "con" can easily be remedied by re-allocating grades and positions. I don't necessarily agree, however, that tensions would immediately subside; given the present cast of characters, you might simply shift the locus of pain.

D. Downgrade the NIOs

This one leaves me cold. We don't need NIOs at all if they are to be nothing more than another staff inside NFAC.

E. Integration and E1. Hybrid Line-Staff

As indicated above, I am not against this in principle, but I don't think the time is propitious. If we do go this way, I would suggest moving immediately to E1 with one or two carefully selected regional units, rather than going all the way to E first. That is, you might put all relevant China analysts together under a leader who would be responsible for national as well as NFAC production, all relevant East Europe analysts together under another. (I chose these two as examples because the numbers of political and economic analysts are similar, while for many countries the political analysts so far outnumber the economists that the latter might feel themselves at a great disadvantage.) I think this might prove very successful, and that success would do a great deal to alleviate the anxieties of those analysts still operating under the traditional arrangement. It would also allow you to retreat if the gains do not seem worth the cost. On the other hand, it would extend the agony of uncertainty over a greater time span.

If you do opt for E initially, I think about a third of the NIO slots could be eliminated immediately (do away with NIO/PE and maybe

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NIO/NP, assign function of NIO/SS to a staff person, combine NIO/CH and NIO/EAP). The non-Soviet current intelligence/policy support functions of OSR probably belong in the Regional Studies area, rather than in the Military area. Similarly, OCR's biographic analysts should be integrated into a regionally-organized analytic unit. And, as said at the beginning, I believe that the Associate for National Intelligence would turn out to be unnecessary and a source of confusion--at least as visualized. You might well want one senior person with such a title, but there is no logical chain of command beneath.

If you should decide to go for an integrated Regional Studies effort, you probably need an Associate for Functional Studies or some such as a co-equal of the Associate for Regional Studies. A very large portion of OER's effort and a significant portion of OPA's are not susceptible to regional approaches. Moreover, these units must interact as much with the Soviet specialists as with the others. You would probably want to put the psychological analysis part of OSI's effort here, as well as much of the geographic analysis.

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9. In sum, then, I would begin by moving immediately to C1. (Dick's parenthetical dismissal of this option in his recommendations section does not deter me since he envisages further changes in this direction in any event--and since any structure we establish will evolve with time, circumstance, and personalities.) If circumstances permit, I would then reopen the question of a collection role for the NIOs (with consequent reopening of the whole NITO/CTS issue). If that is not practical, I would hold at C1 for at least a year or so to see how it works. I would treat any attempt at integrating regional work as a small scale experiment and even then would think long and hard about embarking on it in the near future.

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[Redacted Signature]

Helene L. Boatner

Attachment:
reference

This entire memo is classified
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